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THE HISTORIC CHARACTER  
OF THE  
*American Moravian Church.*

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A. C. Clauser, Printer, No. 4 Market Street, Bethlehem, Pa.



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AMERICAN MORAVIAN CHURCH.

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A Discourse

Preached, by appointment,

BEFORE THE

Moravian Provincial Synod,

BY

EDMUND DE SCHWEINITZ,

Pastor of the Church at Bethlehem, Penn.

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Published by order of Synod.

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## PREFATORY NOTE.

Agreeable to the appointment made by the President of the Synod of 1864, the following discourse was preached in the evening of the first day of the Triennial Provincial Synod of the Northern District of the Moravian Church convened at Litiz, Penn., from the 22d to the 31st of May, 1867, and is now published in accordance with a resolution unanimously adopted by that body.

“REMEMBER THE DAYS OF OLD, CONSIDER THE YEARS OF MANY GENERATIONS; ASK THY FATHER, AND HE WILL SHEW THEE; THY ELDERS, AND THEY WILL TELL THEE.” Deut. xxxii. 7.

The idea underlying the enactment which provides for the preaching of a discourse before our Synod is not that such a discourse shall be what is commonly called “the Synodical Address,” or that it shall be confined within the limits of ordinary sermons and treat of a general theme remotely applicable to the Church we represent; but rather that some particular point—I cite the very language of the resolution—in her history, principles, ritual, or polity, shall be set forth and illustrated. Accordingly I propose to speak, to-night, on the *historic character of the American Brethren’s Church*.

I am led to do this by three reasons. In the first place, our present convocation bears all the dignity, and is beautified by all the associations, of a fourth centennial jubilee. We celebrate the completion of the ecclesiastical structure of our venerable Church; the institution among our forefathers of a ministry of their own, at the Synod of Lhota, on the Barony of Reichenau, in Bohemia; and the transfer to them from the Bohemian Waldenses of that ancient episcopate which we still possess, which was preserved with such care, in the midst of persecutions and exile, by those who came before us, and which constitutes the organic link that makes the Brethren’s Church of to-day a legitimate succession of the *Unitas Fratrum* of old.\* In the next place, ecclesiastical history, whether in its general aspect, or from the point of view of a particular church—to adopt the words of that illustrious divine who deservedly bears the title of “the father of modern church history”—

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\* The Brethren’s Church was founded, in 1457, on the Barony of Lititz, in the north-eastern part of Bohemia, by pious followers of John Huss. Her first ministers were priests of the Calixtine or National Church. The question of a total separation from the latter, and of the institution of a ministry of their own, occupied the attention of the Brethren for ten years, and was, at last, decided affirmatively by the use of the lot, which also designated the first candidates for holy orders, namely, Matthias of Kunwalde, Thomas of Preloue, and Elias of Chrenovic. These were ordained, Matthias as Bishop, Thomas and Elias as priests, by Bishop Michael Bradacius and two other bishops, who had obtained the episcopal succession at the hands of the Bohemian Waldensian Bishop Stephen and his colleagues. All these events occurred just four centuries ago, in 1467.

is "a school of Christian experience, a voice of edification, instruction and warning for all who will hear, sounding through the ages of the past." And, finally, the stage of development which the Moravian Church in this country has reached seems to me to render my theme both opportune and necessary.

It is self-evident that in handling such a subject I must present my own views. The facts which I may bring forward stand fast, and cannot be overthrown. For truth as revealed by history is like the everlasting rock that towers above the sea; it breaks the force of every wave, no matter how subversive its tendency. But the deductions drawn from the facts are subjective. Their correctness can be established by experience only. They arrogate no authority, but are meant simply to suggest thoughts upon topics involving the best interests of the Church. Indeed, this is the sole aim of the discourses which Synod has appointed. I trust, therefore, that in anything I may advance I shall not be understood as taking advantage of the present occasion, which admits of no replies, but that the impossibility of withholding personal opinions, except by dealing in generalities and platitudes, will be generously conceded. At the same time, I would say to my brethren, in the language of the apostle: "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

The words of the text belong to the farewell-song which Moses spake in the ears of all the congregation of Israel. Applying them to ourselves as a people of God, I proceed to consider, first, *what the historic character of the American Brethren's Church was*, next, *what it now is*, and, last, *what it may lawfully become*.

I. With regard to the historic character of our Church as it was, the text says: "Ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders and they will tell thee." We will do this by looking into the early history of the Church. Our fathers came to this country in the second quarter of the last century. In Europe, they had pursued a system of polity which suited to that Continent.\* Amidst a dense population overstocking the land, little towns exclusively Moravian could not but prosper. Their mercantile establishments and shops afforded honest employment, their Brethren's and Sisters' Houses gave the indigent of both sexes a home; while such as longed to escape from the cold formalism of state-churches found these settlements to be cheerful sanctuaries where they could

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\* The basis of this system was Spener's idea of *ecclesiolae in ecclesia*—little churches within the church—carried out and developed by Zinzendorf to an extent which the former had never intended. Zinzendorf made a Moravian parish to be not merely a church in the ordinary sense, but likewise an isolated community, an exclusive town, whose municipal government, industrial pursuits, and social relations were all under the control of the ecclesiastical authorities, and all regulated to the promotion of godliness.

enjoy religion and devote themselves to the exercise of personal piety, undisturbed by the distractions of the world. Nor were the influences of the Diaspora, or Domestic Mission, streaming from such centres into every part of Europe less successful; for they were again in harmony with the ecclesiastical status of the various countries which they reached. Nominal Christians, whom the law of the land had forced to make a profession, were to be constituted true Christians, without separating them from the churches to which they belonged.

Now this system, in all its parts, the Brethren brought with them to the New World. But here existed a state of affairs wholly different from that in Europe. Here was a wide field for industry; the poorest man had abundant opportunities to gain a livelihood. Here was not an excess, but a lack of population. Here, and especially in Pennsylvania, prevailed not only religious liberty, but thousands of persons were in connection with no church, deprived of the means of grace, spiritually careless and neglected. Here, therefore, it was the duty of Christians of every name to organize, to found churches, to bring their converts into their own courts and bestow upon them their own name. There was no other way of successfully evangelizing America.

This our fathers failed to see. They clung to their German polity. They resolved to build exclusive towns for the Brethren, like those in Saxony and Wetteravia, with all their complicated financial appliances and semi-communistic arrangements; and to let these be, on the one hand, places of refuge in the event of the expulsion of the Moravians from Germany, and, on the other, points of departure for missionary activity among those destitute of the Gospel, who were, however, by no means to be received into the Moravian Church, but merely to be converted by Moravian preaching and brought into fellowship with one another. Accordingly, Bethlehem, Nazareth—with its affiliated stations at Christiansbrunn and Gnadenenthal—and later, Litiz, arose, all settlements on the European plan; and through the efforts of Count Zinzendorf, in conjunction with prominent Lutherans and Reformed, “the Congregation of God in the Spirit” was instituted, union synods, embracing Moravians, Lutherans, Reformed, Mennonites, Baptists, and others, were held in Pennsylvania, and zealous heralds of the Cross traversed the country seeking to win souls for Christ. But, while the exclusive system was elaborated even more fully than in Europe, putting restraint upon personal liberty and interfering with the sacred relations of the family, in a way, and to a degree, that appear to us of this generation almost incredible; while the anticipations of the Brethren were fulfilled, and hundreds of them, driven from the Wetteravian churches, came to swell the population of the Moravian towns in America; while this first period of



our history in the New World was distinguished by a faith and self-denials and a devotedness never surpassed since the renewal of the Church; the union-project, with all its catholicity and ideal beauty, proved a complete failure. Instead of more closely cementing religionists, it made a wider breach between them; and what Zinzendorf, with lofty hopes, had brought into existence in 1742, his son-in-law, Bishop John de Watteville, was constrained to abrogate in 1748. "The Congregation of God in the Spirit" was given up, and the Union or so-called Pennsylvania Synod changed into a synod of the Moravian Church.

This was an epoch in our ecclesiastical history, originated by the Lord himself, and overruled to the accomplishing of the very end which our fathers had so earnestly striven to avoid. In the interests of the union-scheme or the religious denominations to which the neighboring settlers traditionally belonged, there had been begun a number of stations in various parts of the land. The converts gathered at these now clamored, with one accord, for admission into the fellowship of the Moravian Church. From some of these posts such requests had come even prior to this period, and had been reluctantly granted. The new overtures could, therefore, not be consistently declined. It would, moreover, have been a wrong, of which the Brethren were incapable, to leave so many souls without the means of grace. In this way, contrary to their intentions and wishes, the Church was enlarged, until, about fifteen years after the founding of Bethlehem, she counted, besides the centres I mentioned before, congregations at Schoeneck, Maguntsehe, (the present Emmaus), Allemaengel, Oley, Heidelberg, Hebron, Bethel, Dansbury, Mt. Joy, Lancaster, York and Philadelphia, in Pennsylvania; in New York City and Staten Island, in New York; at Old Man's Creek, in New Jersey; at Sichern, in Connecticut; at Newport, in Rhode Island; at Broadbay, in Maine; and at Carroll's Manor and Manocksy (Graceham), in Maryland. I omit all reference to the work in North Carolina, because, from its first inception, that was under an ecclesiastical government of its own.

Here, then, was a second opportunity granted to our fathers, nay almost forced upon them by God's own ordering of events, to extend the ancient Moravian Church in the New World. Twenty-five congregations, as many as we now have, not counting those of the Home Mission field, in that era of the American Colonies, was an auspicious beginning; and, amidst the religious destitution which prevailed, a most evident call for the Brethren to go in and possess the land. If they could have persuaded themselves that it was now their duty to labor in accordance with new principles; if they had allowed these twenty-five congregations, representing not less than seven of the original thirteen Colonies, to expand in a natural



way, unshackled by the clogs of their European system; if they had made of them twenty-five churches severally depending upon their own members for support, and permitted them to grow by the same simple yet irresistible development which was infusing strength and power into all other American church-organizations; in short, if they had given free scope to the *Moravian* element, which was so largely represented by immigrants from Moravia, and which, in the foreign mission field was, at that very time, beginning to christianize the world; we would, by the blessing of Almighty God, this day, be one of the leading and most influential religious denominations of the United States.

So far, however, from following this road, our fathers again brought forward their peculiar system of exclusivism, incited by the assumption which had gained ground among them, more and more, that the Brethren were the Israel of the New Covenant, a chosen generation, to which Christ stood in a peculiar relationship. The city and country stations which had fallen to them must be moulded accordingly. They could not be transformed into Moravian towns, but they could be rendered like them in principle. Hence were introduced the same ideas regarding the support of the ministry through funds or farms, and not by the direct contributions of the membership; the same excessive use of the lot, particularly in the admission of new members, so that no one, even if he gave the most convincing proofs of fitness, could become a Moravian unless the lot, cast by the authorities at Bethlehem, had first granted him permission; the same anxiety to keep the Church small; and the same spirit of interference with the private and personal affairs of the individual. The consequences were inevitable. While the regular towns, in despite of the stringency of their system, were kept up by immigration from Germany, the city and country congregations, abnormal in character, neither exclusive settlements nor ordinary churches, had but a sickly existence; some of them pined away very rapidly and were soon relinquished, others, with a handful of members, lingered longer, but at last died out too. Of the twenty-five places which the Brethren possessed about the middle of the last century, there remain to us but eleven; fourteen of them, namely, Gnadenenthal, Christiansbrunn, Allemaengel, Oley, Heidelberg, Hebron, Bethel, Dansbury, Mt. Joy, Old Man's Creek, Sichern, Newport, Broadbay, and Carrol's Manor, belong to the things that were.

Nor were new enterprises inaugurated in a ratio commensurate to such a loss. During a period of seventy-five years, down to the end of the first quarter of the present century, but four churches were founded, and two of these were total failures and no longer exist, namely, the Moravian town at Hope, in New Jersey, and the

station at Gnadenhuetten, on the Mahony, in Pennsylvania. The other two, Gnadenhuetten and Sharon in Ohio, still live, and have grown to be prosperous; but they would never have been commenced if necessity had not been laid upon the Brethren either to settle, or to relinquish, the tract of land in the Tuscarawas Valley granted by Congress, for the benefit of Christian Indians, to the "Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Heathen."

Our fathers saw this numerical decline of the Church, but were not alarmed. It did not conflict with their principles. To lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes was not their mission. Moravian towns, with their many appliances, still formed the great object of their care. The more difficult a task it grew to uphold them, and the more evident it became that they were not in keeping with the genius of this country, the more earnestly did general, provincial and local conferences strive to preserve their integrity. Meanwhile the other congregations were deemed to be of secondary importance, and looked upon as little more than preaching-places with select bands of the faithful clustering around them.

This state of affairs, with but slight modifications, lasted until recent times—times in which brethren who are to-day still on the floor of Synod labored for the Church and the Lord; and nothing shows more convincingly the absorbing relation which the exclusive settlements bore to the Province than the circumstance that at all Synods, or Preparatory Conferences as they were styled—for they were not allowed the dignity of a Synod, being held at long intervals and merely prior to a General Synod—there were two distinct bodies forming the assembly, the one composed of the many representatives of the three Moravian towns, the other of the few representatives of the city and country stations. The deliberations of these two divisions were independent one of another, but, as a matter of course, the former was, in point of fact, the Synod. At the same time, the Synod was, practically, but an advisory committee of the Provincial Helpers' Conference.

Such are the truths which we learn when we ask our fathers to show us their principles, and our elders to tell us of their work; and such, I may add in passing, is the all-sufficient answer to the question which we often hear: "Why is the Moravian Church so small?"

Now from the point of view thus gained we may estimate the historic character of our Zion in this country, as it was. The Brethren who settled here, whatever errors of judgment they may in our opinion have committed, knew full well what they wanted. Their policy was clearly cut, and the goal toward which it pointed was set up squarely with all its distinctive peculiarities. The American Province of the *Unitas Fratrum* united with its Conti-

mental and British Provinces organically and not merely, as now, in the way of a confederation, was to nurse at her bosom little churches within the church, to afford retreats for godly souls where they could spend their days in quietness, to build cities of refuge from the contaminations of the world, to erect habitations of God for the fostering of education and missionary zeal, of simplicity and lowlimbness, of a guileless spirit and a beautiful brotherhood. A Moravian of that day coming forth from his sequestered town and mingling with his fellow Christians was at once recognized as a Moravian. He was the representative of a peculiar people as unmistakably as the Quaker still is. In dress, in manners, in conversation, in humility, and, above all, in unobtrusive but transparent devoutness, he made his mark wherever he came. There was an unction in his whole bearing which none could fail to recognize. And such distinctiveness influenced the city and country stations also. The spirit which they manifested was derived from the church-settlements. They were little planets reflecting the light of these suns of Moravianism. In Philadelphia, for example, no religionist stood higher than the United Brethren. Their honesty and uprightness, their love of peace, their fraternal fellowship with all who were God's dear children, and their silent protest against the fashions, follies and gaities of the world, were proverbial. When the aged men among them came out of the former "Congregation House" on Race Street, and walked to their homes, other men hastened to make way for them, and bowed to them with sincere respect. The unassuming dignity of a royal priesthood impressed even the carnal.

Thus did the Church maintain the historic character which she had brought with her from Germany, and which Zinzendorf, contrary to the wishes of the descendants of the ancient Bohemian and Moravian Brethren, had impressed upon her life; thus did she practically show the beauty of contemplative, but not the energy of active religion; thus did she enjoy the happiness of a Bethany, but not the glory of a Jerusalem. Far be it from me, from me especially, or from any one here present, to asperse the memory of those who came before us. They conscientiously believed their polity to be the best for the furtherance of Christ's Kingdom in this country. We may entertain a different view; but yet, who will not bend with reverence at the shrine of a system based upon a devotedness to God, an abnegation of self, a longing for personal piety in its highest forms, for a daily fellowship with the Savior in its most enjoyable reality, that puts to shame the formalism, pride and vain-glory which make up much of the so-called religion of our day?

II. Proceeding to the next point in my investigation, I inquire

what the historic character of the American Brethren's Church now is. We will gain clearness with regard to this question by briefly pursuing our history.

Twenty-four years ago, in 1843, occurred the second great epoch in the development of American Moravianism. Then, for the first time since the original inauguration of the system, the polity of a church-settlement was abolished. Bethlehem, the mother of our entire ecclesiastical Province, threw open her doors to the world. It was the necessary result of events that had been slowly maturing since 1818; it demonstrated the incompatibility of exclusivism with the spirit and abounding resources of our country; it was financially a wise measure; it tended, even in its religious aspect, to promote spirituality and zeal for Christ's cause; but it was also that blow which shivered the whole structure built up by our fathers, which took from the American Moravian Church her historic character and her distinctive shibboleth, which compelled her either to adopt the principles of activity and progress that are carried out by all the other Christian denominations of the United States, or to accept as the inevitable alternative a gradual but sure extinction. Everything that followed—the changes at Nazareth and Litiz; the winding up of their complicated finances; their incorporation as churches; the constitutional concessions made to our Province by the General Synod of 1848; the agitations at the Provincial Synod of 1855; the overture for provincial independence by the Synod of the following year; the convening of another General Synod, in 1857, expressly in order to consider the propositions of the American Church; their approval by that body; the consequent remodeling of the Constitution of the whole *Unitas Fratrum*;—was a legitimate and unavoidable consequence of that one epoch-measure, and assigned to us the position which we now occupy.

This position is anomalous. Although nearly a quarter of a century has elapsed since the new order of things, the Church is still in a formative state. In most respects, indeed, her progress has been gratifying. Her educational institutions have flourished in an unprecedented manner; her publication enterprise has been crowned with success; her theological school has advanced; home missionary operations, unknown for seventy-five years, have been again set on foot and are conducted with zeal; and, as the basis of all this, the beneficence of her members has been more than quadrupled. In one chief respect, however, she can hardly be said to have prospered, but gives evidence of an unsettled condition, of a want of strength and efficiency. She undertook church-extension as the necessary result of the change in her polity, but its fruits have not been in proportion to the means employed or the opportunities granted. It is true, since 1843, not less than thirty new

enterprises have been begun ; yet only four of these have become self-sustaining, and eight are abandoned. Moreover, one of our oldest, and formerly one of our most influential, churches is dying out ; while another, founded thirty-three years ago, has dwindled down to eighteen members. Upon the whole, of the forty-three churches at present constituting our ecclesiastical Province, twenty-five, or more than one-half, do not number one hundred communicants each, and thirteen not fifty each ; so that, amidst the many thousands swelling the other hosts of the Lord in the United States, we are, including the Moravians of the South, a band of but sixty-two hundred,\* and show scarce the natural increase, certainly not more.

I do not make these statements in a desponding tone, but present them simply as facts which belong to, and illustrate my theme. They seem to me to prove conclusively that the new process of ecclesiastical development, which began in 1843, has not yet reached its maturity. I need hardly say, that the first and most essential requirement is a pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Ghost. But this is a subject of which I am now not treating. In addition to such a divine blessing, there is something else wanting. *We have no rallying-point.* We have been shorn of our former distinctiveness, and have put nothing in its place. The associations of ancient days remain to us, and the glory of our Foreign Mission work sheds a lustre upon our name, and makes our praise to be in all the churches ; but in this whole period of transformation we have never brought out prominently an historic character suited to this land and our new status in the same, nay, we have ourselves never recognized what it ought to be. Our brethren on the Continent of Europe, and in Great Britain, manifest such a character, and consistently follow the principles which it imposes. It is the same which we have laid aside. But by what historic sign are we known, or do we know ourselves ? We look around, to-night, upon our work in the East, in the West, in the South, and we find none, excepting some beautiful reminiscences that hang on our horizon like roseate evening clouds. This is not only a want, but an evil, and a very great one. Scattered as our few churches are from the Atlantic seaboard to the plains of Minnesota, we are in imminent danger of disintegration, of drifting in the wake of other Christian denominations, and of finally perishing amidst the absorbing strength of their under-current. And even if there threatened no peril of this kind, can we go forward and fulfil our present mission without a distinctive character ? In order to convert souls to the Lord Jesus Christ, we need employ no means other than the

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\* Communicants are meant. The whole number of souls is 11,033.



preaching of the everlasting gospel, accompanied with demonstrations of the Spirit and of power, but in order to extend the Moravian Church, we must, first, realize by what right we keep up a separate organization, and must, then, present ourselves to those among whom we labor in some historic form. It is this which draws the converted to a particular household of faith. God's Word is the same in all evangelical churches. By its power men become Christians; but when they are Christians, they become Episcopalians, or Presbyterians, or Lutherans, or Methodists, according as they are attracted by the distinctive features which history confers upon these various bodies of believers. Thus must it be with us, too, and with us particularly. On account of our numerical weakness, we need the strength of an historic character even more than other churches.

III. What, then, I go on to inquire, may that character lawfully become in the future? Our text informs us. "Remember," it says, "the days of old, consider the years of many generations." Arbitrarily to create for ourselves a new historic form would be as illegitimate as it is unnecessary. God himself has given us what we need.

We pass by the associations that blossom around the Hutberg of Saxony, not in the spirit of disdain, but with sincere veneration, and go back beyond the times of Christian David and Zinzendorf and Spangenberg, to the days of those Bohemian fathers who were gathered, four centuries ago, as we are met now, to deliberate on Zion's peace and Zion's prosperity. We find them Reformers before the Reformation, earnest, fervent, godly, full of faith and works. We find them founding the oldest Protestant Episcopal Church that exists, giving to her an ecclesiastical form of the most perfect symmetry, and taking care to render her spiritually the body of Christ. We find them making personal piety a test of membership, and exercising a holy discipline with an almost Puritanic severity; upholding the Word of God as the only norm of doctrine and rule of life; confessing Jesus on the cruel rack and at the fiery stake; wandering for His sake, in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. We find them, in later times, taking counsel with Luther and Melancthon, Calvin and Bucer, and many other Reformers of Germany and Switzerland; catholic in feeling, broad in their brotherhood, promoting union among all Protestants, constituting, through the immortal *Consensus Sandomiriensis*, even more than a modern Evangelical Alliance, and yet ever maintaining their own constitution and order; urging upon their contemporaries the necessity of a pure church; exhibiting in practice holy living, and not merely a reform of doctrine. In the irresistible power of these God-begotten principles, we find

them spreading throughout Bohemia, Moravia, and Poland, in spite of unceasing persecutions; converting the highest magnates of these realms, educating the young of all classes of society, using the press with almost its present efficiency, scattering bibles, hymn-books, and catechisms broadcast over these lands, and enriching them with a religious literature in so classic a vernacular that it remains a model unto this day. In brief, we find them an active, progressive, influential body of Christians, a church built up of lively stones, offering spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. We meet with them again, and to some extent and in comparison with the exaltedness of their original standard, they have fallen from their first love. But soon they return to the Lord their Maker, amidst the last storm of antichristian rage that overwhelms them; they accept, by the thousands, exile rather than apostacy; are finally reduced to but a "hidden seed," and continue such until the appointed time of refreshing. Then they renew their youth like the eagle's, come forth from obscurity with their episcopate and discipline intact, with their faith and zeal rejuvenated; give life and form and an illustrious name to our present Church, extend her to this Western Continent, and bear the standard of the Lord to the most degraded heathen tribes.

From these fathers we derive that historic character which we may lawfully assume in the future. It is in harmony with our present position in the United States, and it is just what we require in order to render that position strong and practically available in our labors for Christ. For, this character will prove to be the missing link in the chain of development that has been welded since the year 1843. It will promote unity among us, preserve us from disintegration, keep off from our altars strange fire, create a common tendency, a harmonious aim, and, by the blessing of our fathers' God, crown our work with abounding success.

I desire to be fully understood. I do not, at this time, advocate constitutional changes, or anything of that sort. I plead merely for a positive assumption and distinct manifestation of that historic character which we have ever had, but which has been latent among us. Let it rise to power. Let it be brought to the consciousness of our ministers; let it be impressed upon our candidates for the ministry; let it be taught in our theological school; let it kindle enthusiasm in the hearts of our students; let our people recognize its glory and so learn to love and honor the venerable church of confessors and martyrs to which they belong; let it be made known in the land, through the press and every other proper agency, wherever we come to begin new enterprises; and to the question—"Who are the Moravians?"—which not unfrequently encounters us, let it trumpet, with no uncertain



sound, the stately answer. In a word, having for a whole century in vain attempted to make the Zinzendorffian system flourish on American soil; and having now for a quarter of a century been without a distinctive character; let us take up the thread of the historic development broken off when our Moravian forefathers, at the founding of Bethlehem, were constrained to accept the exclusive polity of their German leaders, and, in the name of Him who revealed His divine will to the men of Lhota, four hundred years ago, build up the ancient Brethren's Church, the Church of Gregory and Matthias, of Luke and Augusta, of Blahoslav and Comenius, in this Western World.

In saying this, I think not merely of provincial success, and not at all of a sectional Moravian name; as little as I imagine that we will ever grow numerically a very large body, rivaling other Christian denominations of our land, the time for that being irrevocably past. But I do think of Christ's kingdom and of the Savior's glory. I do hope and pray that the United Brethren, *in all the earth*, may be found faithful to their mission when the Lord shall come. We live in a momentous era. The power of God is sweeping over the globe; the white horse and its rider with bow and crown are gone forth conquering and to conquer; the evangelization of the human race is at hand. Is a Church like ours, small yet established in every Continent and on many isles of the sea, embracing a whole constellation of nationalities, with a history unparalleled in all history, once extinct and then renewed—is such a Church to take no part in this final triumph of the gospel? What you may think, my brethren, I know not; but as for me, I believe that the Unitas Fratrum has been kept as one confederated body throughout the world until this day, in order to perform in the future greater achievements than ever in the past.

I do not pretend to be a prophet; but as I stand here and look into the years to come, I behold the Christianity of a new age putting on its strength; I see works done in God as never before mighty to the pulling down of strongholds; I discern America leading the van of the armies of the Lord, and Europe shaking herself from the dust, stripping off the fetters of despotism, separating the church from the state, and setting religion free; and, as this morning's red of millennial glory breaks upon my view, I catch a glimpse of a renovated Unitas Fratrum, combining the best elements of all its historic periods, labouring for Christ with a concentrated energy worthy of such an age, possessing once more its early seats in Bohemia and Moravia, enlarging its foreign mission-field to unprecedented dimensions, sending natives of the West Indies and the Cape Colony to convert the teeming multitudes of Central Africa, advancing with a host from the table-lands of the

Himalayas into the very heart of China, and, whether at home or abroad, whether in Germany, or England, or the United States, carried forward by an outpouring of its ancient "witness spirit" such as has not yet been known, with the whole church of the future, toward that consummation of which great voices shall say in heaven: "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ."

"Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us: unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. AMEN."







